

Mzimondajá: The Eastern Timbira

71

224
791 but remained standing aloof. But after the spoils had been piled up, a tamhá'k went there to select a portion for himself and his fellow members, and they then distributed it among themselves.

[789] If the hunting party had killed a tapir, all persons within reach gathered round the carcass, and an old man selected as vigorous a young tamhá'k as could be found. The man chosen set off his occipital hair by tying in the manner explained, and painted the oral region with charcoal powder; whereupon the old man stuck a wad of cotton between the tamhá'k's lips. For evisceration the beast was laid, belly up, on palm leaves, then a knife was ground and put on the game. The tamhá'k stepped up, seized the knife, slowly made a single downward incision in the skin, cutting chest and belly, and redeposited the blade. The object of this performance was to render the tapir fat when dissected. The old man thereupon handed the animal's liver to one of the tamhá'k's relatives, who had a pie, ku'kú'ti, prepared from it, which the young men brought to the elders in the plaza.

224 The killer of a jaguar screamed beside the carcass until one of his hunting companions approached, took away the hunter's weapon, whether bow or gun, and gave him his own in exchange. The hunter distributed the skin among the bravest men, who used it for armlets on their upper arms.

776
782
224 The sun is considered the protector of game animals, which are thus commended to his care: Of a late afternoon an old man summoned the men to form a circle round him in the plaza. He stood resting on a stick, faced east, turning his back to the solar disk, and prayed: "Kédeti imá prire kuna yamúke imá katí vakokó rúitá a'ná stó impey!" Approximately this means: "May the Grandfather [sun] protect all beasts so they grow up and can be eaten by man." Then the suppliant successively enumerated the long series of species whose welfare he commended to the sun.

FISHING

226
171 Fishing is but slightly developed among the Timbira. Its economic insignificance has been noted by Snethlage, too.² Even with tribes like the Kres'pu'mkataye and the Timbira of Araparytú, who live directly on the banks of sizable rivers, fishing plays a subordinate role. As for the steppe Timbira, the brooks near their settlements furnish only small fish in moderate quantities, so that a family could hardly ever eat its fill from the produce of a catch. Fishing was naturally eliminated for the Krikati, who dipped up their water supply from water holes. However, in special cases certain small species form the prescribed diet.

226 Fish are secured by shooting with arrows (pl. 16, A, c), with a line, and (after drugging) with a scoop net (pl. 17, c). Fish spears and anchored nets are lacking, as are basketry traps and the "pari" traps frequent among the Tupí tribes and also found among the Apinayé. The fish arrows are sometimes, but not as a rule, without feathers. They are generally marked by the greater length of their gynurium shafts and bear simple barbed points. Harpoon darts and arrows with several points are unknown.

226
177
463 Tradition does not report aboriginal fishhooks. Those now in use are of iron, mostly from North America, and are designated by the term kyé, derived from Portuguese esnel. The Indians themselves manufacture the line from tucum fiber. Angling devolves mainly on the children, women, and old men.

226
114 The Rangk'kamakra poison fish with the plant now cultivated by them and called kalón by the Timbira, the tinguy of the Neobrazilians, from whom the Indians borrowed it. Another fish drug, less used at present, but in my opinion

² Northeastern Ind., 160.